



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Whatcom Unified Command Supports Community Partnership
in Response to Increased Need at Shuksan Healthcare Center**

BELLINGHAM, WA—Whatcom Unified Command (WUC) has facilitated a collaboration with PeaceHealth to support Shuksan Healthcare Center amid the COVID-19 outbreak.

On Sunday, March 22, WUC announced 32 COVID-19 cases associated with Shuksan Healthcare Center. WUC and PeaceHealth are working together to support Shuksan Healthcare Center to ensure they are able to continue to provide continuing care to their residents for the best patient outcomes as possible. On Monday, March 23, updated protocols went into effect that are intended to help limit the spread of COVID-19, especially within our community's vulnerable populations. Additionally, Governor Inslee's "Stay Home, Stay Healthy" Order has been implemented to slow the spread of COVID-19 in all settings.

PeaceHealth will be supporting Shuksan Healthcare Center by providing supplemental healthcare provider capacity for at least four weeks, effective immediately. These providers, including registered nurses (RNs), certified nursing assistants (CNAs), and licensed practicing nurses (LPNs), have all volunteered for this temporary assignment at Shuksan Healthcare Center. The PeaceHealth providers will be working full time at Shuksan and will not be providing service at any other healthcare facility. Upon ending their time at Shuksan, providers will enter into a two week, fully-paid furlough period to ensure safety for all patients. At Whatcom Unified Command, we share our heartfelt support and appreciation for these healthcare providers.

In addition, PeaceHealth will be providing meal service for Shuksan Healthcare Center, which has been ongoing since Monday, March 23. Three meals a day for at least two weeks will be provided to residents. Whatcom Transit Authority will transport the meals from PeaceHealth to Shuksan using appropriate protocols. WUC is developing a strategy to provide supplemental cleaning at the facility.



Incident Commanders for Whatcom Unified Command praised the efforts: “This exemplifies why we came together to solve problems throughout the community to mitigate the impacts of this pandemic.”

This coordinated response with Shuksan Healthcare Center is an example of how Unified Command is prepared to address and resolve community needs. Together, we continue to rise to meet this and other looming needs.



PeaceHealth staff preparing meals for Shuksan Healthcare Center residents and staff.

Photo courtesy PeaceHealth

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